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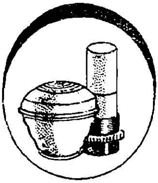

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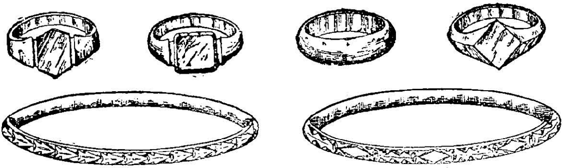

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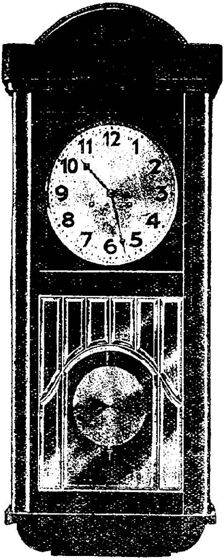

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"Deserts Shall Blossom Again"

By NICHOLAS ROERICH

FROM time to time, humanity fittingly reminds itself of the need of revitalizing the deserts—those malignant and leprous spots of earth. It is true, that these efforts occur only sporadically—somewhere, something must be done for reforestation! But the native inhabitants of a locality themselves, with the most predatory instincts, try to deforest the land—in other words, they impair their own conditions of existence. In this regard, it is extremely encouraging to see the forestation of Nippon, England and Germany. At times, in our own schools, we celebrate Arbor Day, but the occasion remains a superficial outing, while the serious implication and entire purpose of this celebration is overlooked.

If the rural populations, however, are so indifferent to the questions of forestation and forest reserves which seem so obvious, they are still more indifferent to the subject of drouth-resistant grasses and plants.

A curious episode was related to us by our Expedition botanist, Professor T. P. Gordeyev, in regard to the planting of grass : he once tried to explain to a peasant the importance of methods of sowing grass so as to insure fertilization and strengthening of the soil. The peasant listened to him very morosely. Finally, the botanist asked him, " Why do you not begin this practical work on your own land ?"

" You mean me ?", the peasant asked sternly.

" Yes, you ", the botanist said.

The answer was even more austere, " God creates the grass !"

The botanist again tried to find additional obvious proofs. And again came the same exchange of conversation—" You mean me?"... " Yes, you."

And still louder came the reply, " God creates the grass !"

And for the third time the botanist tried to explain the benefits of sowing grass. But by this time, the result was a threatening outcry from the peasant, " *God creates the grass* !" After which it was evident that it was safer to stop the conversation.

This phrase, " God creates the grass ", synthesizes the rural psychology—one might even say the universal psychology. In spite of due instruction and information, the great mass of the population still holds to the idea that trees as well as grass grow by themselves. And, having cut away his forests and destroyed the grass without restraint, man is astonished at the ominous manner in which the dead sands begin to overtake him and personal disaster becomes the anguish of the entire earth.

During our excavations in the completely dead sands of Asia, it was enlightening to unearth the roots of age-old forests. Strangely enough, precisely on these sites one may find excellent dwelling-sites and bits of woven grasses indicating that life once flourished here. The ancient Chinese Chronicles, with their meticulous notes of early Chinese travellers, describe these now-eroded sites as picturesque cities and villages which flourished amidst plenty. We cannot attribute these changes entirely to cosmic actions. The hand of man has been especially reprehensible. For instance, the picturesque Kangra Valley in the Punjab, during the comparatively recent times of Emperor Akbar, was regarded as one of the most thickly-forested localities ; at present this locality is beginning to suffer from lack of trees. Although the local government is doing everything possible to fight this evident misfortune, the initial misstep was taken long ago and the successive tasks become increasingly burdensome. The man who cuts away a tree is generally quite indifferent to the need of planting another immediately, to take its place, or at least of taking some care that the ugly remaining stump should not impede the young seed trees. As for regulating the crowded seedlings—this is out of question !

In the dead deserts of Asia, one may often hear the murmur of underground streams, which at times give rise to the beliefs in subterranean life Not seldom, these streams have been driven under stones and pebbles by human hands which have rapaciously destroyed the vegetation.

The expanses of sand in Central Asia, Lithuania, America are limitless—thus in the most diverse parts of the earth, one finds these same soil-maladies which worry husbandmen. It is therefore readily understood why President Roosevelt and Secretary of Agriculture, Wallace also worry over the rescue and revivification of the desert, not only through reforestation but also through the discovery of the best

drouth-resistant grasses In this sense, the steppes and gobis of Asia provide wonderful material for study Upon these sand dunes, upon these endless mounds is still preserved the original vegetation which has withstood all types of catastrophes. The dunes of Barga—a part of Mongolia where "God still creates the grass"—provides opportunity for the most diverse practical observations. There one still finds remnants of the great forests; there still are found great quantities of feathergrass, and other steppe grasses at once strongly resistant and useful for forage It is especially fitting that the study of these grasses which withstand drouth and other climatic catastrophes is now being carried on along broad channels. Because such experiments require years of work and the sooner attention is paid to this imperative need of earth, the sooner and more effectively will the panacea be found.

People who in the simplicity of their souls still think that "God creates the grasss" should also remember the other proverb, "Trust God and do your own share."

Whenever I see the irrigation of the Egyptian desert, I always realize how comparatively little is needed in order to transform the seemingly dead surface to new blossoming. And in this regard, every-one—whether specialist or well-intentioned citizen should cooperate equally in aiding the entire country. This will provide one of those anonymous benevolent movements by which human existence is carried on.

Crossing the endless desert spaces, I always realize the countless possibilities still preserved in these virgin steppes, these rich vistas, these expanses where the best breeds of cattle could again be raised for universal benefit. I do not even venture to speak here of the vast store of medical plants scattered throughout these regions, verily by a divine grace, and still utilized so little by men, since science has only now begun to pay attention to these treasures which have been known for centuries but which have been forgotten in the bustle of life Only now also are people beginning to study with utmost exactness the local languages in order to avoid the errors which so often arose through lack of precise translations. In many conventional and symbolic expressions of the Tibetan and Aryavedic pharmacopoea emerges the profound significance of the ancient experiments. From the medical point of view, Barga and the slopes of Hingen offer excellent materia medica. Together with the discoveries one's path here is enlivened by the peaceful Mongols whom one encounters and to whom the entire sympathy of one's soul goes out. Of course, only a knowledge of their language will draw from them the secrets of their souls. On the way we visited one of the greatest Mongolian monasteries—Ganjur. The name of the Monastery has itself been preserved from the Eighteenth Century when the Chinese Emperor

donated to it the complete Collection of the Sacred Books of Ganjur. We saw these volumes and admired the excellent edition made in Peking; unfortunately, the wood-bindings were destroyed in one of the recent catastrophes!

In Ganjur, George found in the possession of one of the old lamas, a Tibetan medical manuscript and succeeded in copying it—it is most fortunate that he possesses a complete familiarity with Mongolian and Tibetan, because for this work it is invaluable. In the monastery there are numerous Images, and the lamas speak of the coming "War of Shambhala", adding, "But a man of great heart is needed for it." We were present in the monastery during the discourses of the pupils when the little ones, clapping hands, ask each other the most extraordinary question. How illuminating are these ancient traditions.

During our trip, we realized again and again how necessary it is to preserve these irreplaceable treasures. And how often, today with all our relative civilization, the most dreadful barbarities occur. Yes, we must learn to safeguard not only the treasures of man's handiwork, but to extend this caution to all the true sources of light. For this reason, the revivification of the deserts, literally as well as in its sublimated spiritual implication, becomes one of the most noble responsibilities of humanity.

May all the deserts blossom again!

Village Improvement

By R. GALLETTI, M. A., I. C. S.

(Continued from our August issue)

Section III. The Aims and Methods of Village Improvement.

ONCE a survey has been made of a village, whether on the lines suggested in the preceding section or in any other way, the workers will be able to see both what is necessary and what is practicable. One thing should always be remembered—that you never know what is possible and what impossible until you have tried. Difficulties have to be faced in order that they may be overcome. Neither want of funds nor want of interest are valid excuses. Those who prefer such excuses only accuse themselves of want of will.

Allowing for the various circumstances of different villages, the work of improvement must in general follow the same course. The final aim may be described as Better Living by means of Co-operation. Co-operation must not be taken in any narrow sense, but in its widest meaning as corporate action for mutual improvement. Before it achieves its aim of Better Living it must pass through the two stages (whether successive or simultaneous) of Co-operation in Understanding and Co-operation in Practice. The first stage is one of Education, again in no narrow sense. The villager must learn the principles of physical and economic well-being and the application of the principles in his own case. Under the main head of Health he must learn the essentials of Sanitation, Recreation and Nutrition. Under the main head of Production and Thrift he must study improvements in his Cultivation, (including the culture of Trees), in his Cattle, and in his Village Industries. He must learn also the interaction of his various activities; for instance he must realise how Cultivation affects Nutrition and Nutrition, Cultivation.

The second stage is one of Association, in which the villager must join forces and resources in various organisations for various ends. The exact forms of organisation must depend on local circumstances; but two types are basic. One is the Council of Elders, whether elected under the Village Panchayats Act or informally constituted. The other is the Co-operative Society in all its forms, starting with the Credit Society.

It is essential that the village should work out its own salvation. The first impulse may come from outside; but if the results are to be permanent, the changes effected must be with the means and the hands of the villagers themselves. Otherwise, as the fate of the

Gurgaon experiment in the Punjab showed, as soon as the external influence is removed, the whole fabric collapses. It is not that the interest evaporates; the interest never was there. A man will be interested only in what he himself wants to do or to be done; and he will be better pleased with what he has done for himself, however poor the outcome, than with what has been done for him.

It may help workers to order their own ideas and perfect their own schemes if the foregoing outline is somewhat expanded. The succeeding paragraphs will give leading points under the main heads.

A. Co-operation in Understanding. Those who know things must tell those who do not know. The strong must guide the weak and the clever correct the foolish. Officers of Government departments will talk to the villagers and organise demonstrations, displays and readings. They will be assisted by volunteer workers. The villagers must co-operate by listening attentively and intelligently and by carrying into execution the projects which they find suitable to their own abilities and circumstances.

Education of the Villager. The officers of Government and volunteer workers will try to make the villagers understand how they can improve their own condition. They will begin from first principles (showing cause and effect, explaining why certain practices are correct and how they follow from elementary scientific principles, which will be explained in the simplest terms), and go on to applications, showing the connection between the various forms of improvement and expounding what has been done in other countries and at other times. Talks should be diversified by gramophone recitals, music displays, dramatic performances and readings, and illustrated whenever possible by magic lantern and cinematograph. The elementary education of the village must be scrutinised and improved, and adult classes conducted. The co-operation of parents is to be secured and the example of other countries (e. g. Denmark and Turkey) held up for imitation. The instruction will be mainly on the principles of physical well-being, or Health, and of economic well-being, or Production and Thrift.

(a) **Health.** On this side the principal worker will be the Health Inspector, who must enlist the help of the School Teachers and Panchayat Board (or Rural Committee, or whatever else has been instituted in the village.) He should stress the basic notion that physical well-being is the essential foundation of a happy life. He should describe and illustrate the fundamental principles of Physiology and Medicine, with especial attention to the nature and functions of the Blood, Lungs, Muscles, Bones and Nerves, and explain the principal causes of ill-health—i. e. (a) Germs and Viruses, (b) Want of oxygen, (c) Want of exercise, (d) Want of Nourishment. He can then expatiate

on the prevention of these four causes by Sanitation, Recreation, and Nutrition.

I. SANITATION.

Sanitation combats germs and infection of all kinds and secures a proper supply of Oxygen. Most of the worst diseases are due to the presence in the human body of microscopic organisms, which are carried into the body either in water or in food or in dust or by the bites of insects and fleas and lice. Malaria, Cholera, Dysentery, Plague, Tuberculosis, Enteric, Leprosy and Eye-troubles are all preventible if people will only be clean in their persons, their houses, and their surroundings. The Health Inspector and his helpers must explain the nature of these diseases and how they are spread. He must describe the conditions in which flies, mosquitoes, and rats thrive, and show how these pests can be kept away. He must describe the construction and use of latrines of various types and the way to store manure and rubbish He must explain how fresh air and light is to be secured not only by the proper construction of houses but also by outdoor games for those who do not work in the fields.

II. RECREATION.

The examples of Sweden, Germany and Russia have shown how physical health can be promoted by exercise. Sports, games and recreations are of value in the development of muscles, mind and character alike. Outdoor games and sports, which can be demonstrated by Scouts, Girl Guides and others, have a special value for health. Indoor recreations are equally required for mental health. Reading, music, libraries and dramas are within the reach of the villager if he makes up his mind to have them. Gardening is an occupation much to be encouraged, as a small garden not only provides amusement but also supplements the diet with vegetables, an essential of good nutrition.

III. NUTRITION.

There is not yet enough scientific certainty about nutrition, but it is at least known that the body requires certain elements and that various foods contain these elements in varying proportions. For health the diet must contain an adequate supply of all the essential —Proteins, Carbo-hydrates, Fats, Minerals, and Vitamins. The instructor should tell the villagers something about the nature of each of these elements, in what foods they are found, how they affect the different parts of the body, and what happens when they are missing from the diet. He should explain to them how they can balance their diet and emphasise the necessity of growing the right crops owing to the different nutritive values of grains, pulses, legumes, vegetables and fruit. (This is a matter which also affects the villager as a cultivator; a well-planned rotation and distribution of crops is good for the soil

as well as for the tiller of the soil.) The importance of milk in the diet must be insisted upon, and the dependence of human beings on the proper care of milch-cattle set in a strong light. (This also affects the villager as a cultivator and owner of cattle, since the growing of fodder crops is a necessity if his cattle are to be well fed and give good milk.)

Culiivation and the care of cattle come under the head of

B. Production and Thrift. On this side the principal workers will be the Agricultural Demonstrator, the Veterinary Assistant Surgeon and the Inspector of Co-operative Societies, who will have to enlist the help of advanced ryots and landowners as well as other volunteers. They must begin by pointing out that if Expenditure exceeds Income, the result is Debt; and if wants exceed Expenditure, the result is Misery. The villager's needs exceed his expenditure because his income is too small, and his income is small because of his ignorance. The reason why his expenditure exceeds his income is partly that his income is small, but more that he is improvident and does not work out his family budget. While he remains an individualist he will remain ignorant and improvident. By co-operation he can achieve Thrift and Self-help, leading to increased Production and Earnings. The instructors should tell him what has been done in other countries and at the Government farms in this Presidency. The principles of plant and animal biology, heredity, breeding and nutrition should be carefully and simply explained.

I. CULTIVATION.

The methods by which agriculture has been transformed in Europe and America are the same as those which must be used in India in their underlying principles, though crops, soils and climatic conditions differ. The Agricultural Department has been at work long enough to have (1) evolved pure and improved varieties of seed for all the principal crops; (2) tested and approved various implements for better, cheaper and quicker cultivation; (3) devised or improved methods for reducing the cost and increasing the efficiency of cultivation; (4) experimented on the best way to keep and use manure, and the best manures to use; (5) studied the rotations in use and worked out better rotations for various tracts. The recommendations of agricultural experts have to be made after a study of the local conditions, so that it is not possible to prescribe a definite set of improvements for all villages. But in general it may be said that the officers of the Agricultural Department can give ryots advice which will diminish the cost of production and increase the gross outturn, so that the net return may be immensely augmented. The only difficulty is the initial outlay for some of the improvements. If this outlay is too much for individual ryots, even with the help of Government loans, the thing to do is to form Agricultural Improvement and Demonstration Societies.

Then the cost and risk is shared by so many that no individual need find any great sum and even if things go wrong no individual will suffer any great loss. In this way new equipment can be obtained and new experiments tried with the greatest of ease.

II. PLANTATION.

The villager of to-day does not seem so ready as his forefathers to plant trees either in his own land or in the village site or in *porambokes*. Consequently trees for timber, fuel, fruit, green manure and shade are becoming fewer and more costly to buy. It is easy and profitable to grow trees on inferior land, and the rules framed by Government are designed to encourage ryots to do so. If the soil in which the seeds are planted is well worked and manured, and the seeds are planted at the right season (just after the first rains), it is not even necessary to spend much labour in watering.

III. CATTLE.

In spite of the existence of such excellent breeds as the Mysore and Ongole (about which the Agricultural Department has published most interesting bulletins), the cattle of S. India are for the most part miserable specimens, comparing very badly with the animals of Europe. But the improvement of cattle in Europe has taken place in the last two centuries and the same methods can well be applied in India, as they have already been applied in Mysore and elsewhere. What is required is Breeding and Feeding. The ryot can be told the Mendelian theory in simple terms, and how it is applied in the breeding of animals. The advantages of breeding his own cattle instead of buying them from dealers can be made clear. The characteristics of the various breeds and their different degrees of usefulness as draught and milking cattle should be described. Good cattle require good fodder. The value of different kinds of crops as fooder and the advantages of growing special fodder crops should be explained. (It should not be forgotten that certain fodder crops are particularly useful in rotation with grain crops to restore the soil by fixing nitrogen and furnishing organic matter.) The advantages of the dry earth and loose box systems of stabling animals and conserving their excreta should be made clear. The ryot should be instructed in the nature of the diseases of cattle and their prevention and treatment The use of castration to improve herds by eliminating feeble animals and reducing the excessive numbers of the animals subsisting on the scanty pasture available should be preached. The improvement of carts and cart-tracks should be encouraged in order to ensure long life and good health to draught bullocks.

IV, VILLAGE INDUSTRIES.

It has been found that the cultivator can greatly improve his condition if he uses his spare time to practise a lucrative hobby or by-industry. In Ṭravaṇcọre they have achieved much with poultry-keeping

and bee-keeping. Weaving and basket-making have also helped many cultivators who could not make a living out of their land alone. But all small industries of this kind need a certain knowledge and training if they are to be pursued with success. Trained men can be found to teach the villager, if only the villager will see that a sufficient remuneration is given to the teacher.

C. Co-operation in Practice. Once the people of a village have begun to understand what can be done they must set themselves to work out their own salvation. They must join forces and resources so as to provide themselves with money, labour and ideas. They can look to Government and others for advice and support but not for more than a little material help. The resources of Government and of organised benevolence will not reach more than a few of the thousands of villages in the Presidency. The villagers must be ready to work with their own hands, their own tools and their own animals. If they need credit, they must obtain it by showing themselves honest, industrious and enterprising. They must not fight each other or think their interests differ from those of their neighbours. Dirt, disease faction, squalor are disadvantages to each and every man in a village; cleanliness, harmony and good cultivation bring benefits to all. As the advantage of all is the advantage of each, each must bring what he can to the common endeavour.

Association. As soon as the villagers show themselves willing to unite in working hard and honestly for their own advancement (which may be long before the stage of education is completed) the officers of Government and their helpers should assist them to form the societies or organisations they need. The Co-operative Department and the District Panchayat Officer will play the chief part in this. There should be no haste in forming any society. Membership should be restricted to the honest, sober and industrious. Borrowing should be discouraged and saving encouraged. Extravagance should be curbed and loans granted only for productive purposes. The Societies should try to draw on local funds and not look too much for help from outside. Control must be firm; yet initiative must be fostered. The Societies must be allowed to work out their own policy and methods; but advice should be given judiciously by Government officials and errors should be checked at once.

Village Panchayats. The Village Panchayat is not generally thought of as a form of co-operation. Yet it is essentially co-operative if properly understood and managed, whether it is formally constituted under the Village Panchayat Act or informally started with the consent of the villagers. The great advantage of the statutory Panchayat is that it gets a share of the land cess. This may be a considerable sum in a large village and even in a small village is something for a start. The villager is inclined to be against

the statutory Panchayat because he is averse from being taxed. But if a Panchayat will start work with its share of the land cess and at first only ask for voluntary contributions of small amounts, it may use the money to such advantage that the villagers will realise how much they may benefit themselves by submitting to a small house-tax or similar levy. In order that this may happen the Panchayat should always endeavour to secure the co-operation of the village as a whole. Its deliberations should be as public as possible; and important proposals can well be submitted to a gathering of the whole village and a vote taken. Once the villager feels that the panchayat really represents him he will feel that its decisions are really his own decisions; and once it has succeeded in giving him visible benefits he will understand that these things are worth paying for. An informal Panchayat or Village Reconstruction Committee must work in the same way, endeavouring at all times to prove that it stands for the community as a whole and not for any faction or individual. The Panchayat should not only meet publicly; it should also meet often and never go to sleep over its work. It should draw up a definite programme of things to be done, in the order of importance. Generally water-supply should come first; then sanitation (drains, latrines and the like); then village roads and streets; then education, not forgetting the village library. The planting of village topes and the supervision of *kudimaramot* are other praiseworthy activities.

II. VILLAGE ASSOCIATIONS.

A Panchayat or Committee can be the Executive of a village. But the village also requires an organisation to make effective the opinions and wishes of the General Body An Association in which the villagers all join and discuss their wishes can instruct the Panchayat and also keep in touch with the officers of Government. It can work steadily for a cleaner village, a better school, more recreation, and special facilities (water, roads, lighting and the rest). It can sponsor and help to organise and later watch over co-operative societies of every kind. It can create, direct and express public opinion. It can co-operate with the administration not only by helping officers to get into touch with the ryots but also by eliciting the views of the common people and bringing them to the notice of the authorities. If it remains politically impartial it can help candidates of various parties to address the electorate. It can force on the attention of the elected representative the needs of the villagers. In all this it will be stronger and more effective if it forms a unit in a wider organisation covering a whole taluk or division. The expenses would be trifling and the benefits incalculable. All that is required is that important landowners and other influential men should give a lead.

III. CO-OPERATIVE CREDIT SOCIETIES.

The Co-operative movement has spent its initial force and suffered a very serious reverse of late.* It is now time to profit from what has been learnt even from the worst mistakes. The secret of successful co-operative credit is not so much cheap credit (though that is what is superficially most attractive) as controlled credit. A village society should be small and vigorous rather than large and apathetic. Thrift and prudence must be required of the members. The purpose of loans and the borrower's power to repay must be scrutinised. Loans must be for desirable purposes and must be properly applied. The borrowings and lendings of the Society must be as small, not as large, as possible. Loans must be for short terms and strictly limited according to the borrower's normal income. The bulk of them should be for agricultural expenses and repayable within six months or a year. Members must attend the General Meetings, and members who take no interest in the working of the Society should be expelled.

IV. CO-OPERATIVE SAVINGS BANK.

No Co-operative Credit Society is complete without a Savings Bank. Members should be encouraged to deposit whatever they can, however little it may be. The principle of the chit fund is well known in this country. Regular payments of small amounts create in the end a large fund for credit. A similar principle can be made use of for the funding of debt. If every debtor pays a little into a special fund from time to time, when the day of reckoning with his creditor arrives he will have the means to pay. A Co-operative Society which organises such a sinking fund will in due course enable its members to liquidate their prior debts and thereafter obtain credit on easy terms from the Society itself.

V. AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT SOCIETIES.

Societies for better farming can do things that their members could not do individually. They can for instance conduct experiments in new methods and with new varieties of seed. As all share the expense and the risk, none can lose much if the experiment fails; if it succeeds, everybody has learnt something and will gain. Such societies can create and maintain small demonstration farms by renting, buying or borrowing land and cultivating it under the guidance of an agricultural expert for several years. They can act as seedsmen and agents for obtaining pure seed and improved implements and retailing them at the lowest possible prices to their members. They can maintain stud-bulls and stud-buffaloes and introduce improvements in the stalling and feeding of cattle. They can organise the planting of topes and get their members to plant trees all over the village. They can arrange for the better conservation of the growth

* This was written in 1937. Since then the movement has recovered its momentum and has even developed new vigour.

on unreserves by securing the agreement of all the ryots and cattle owners to the closing of certain areas in rotation for a number of years.

VI. CO-OPERATIVE LOAN AND SALE SOCIETIES.

Co-operation for credit and for production is incomplete without co-operation in marketing. The producer gets only a part of the final sale price, because every middleman must have his profit. A marketing society which sells the produce direct to wholesalers or retailers in the big cities obtains better prices for its members. Government is now setting up central marketing organisations with whose aid the village societies can put their produce on the market at good prices. While the produce remains unsold the Society can advance substantial sums to the ryot on the security of the produce in their custody ; so the ryot does not have to sell in a hurry in order to obtain cash.

VII. VILLAGE INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATIONS.

In order to develop any profitable village industry, whether it is poultry-keeping or bee-keeping or weaving or basket-making or any other occupation that the cultivator can practise in his spare time, skilled instruction and guidance is wanted. Either an instructor from outside must be secured or a villager must be sent to be trained. To pay the cost of the training or the remuneration of the instructor a large number of villagers either in a single big village or in several neighbouring villages must combine, so that small contributions from each will make up a sufficient sum. (It is to be remarked that in the same way several villages can unite to employ an agricultural expert or a veterinary doctor—and it would be well with their while.)

VIII. BETTER LIVING SOCIETIES.

Where custom prescribes unhealthy, extravagant or harmful practices, individuals cannot swim against the tide. But it has been shown by experience in the Punjab and elsewhere that if a number of persons combine to reform their own practices, they can in the strength of their mutual support face and eventually change public opinion. In this way they have reduced expenditure on marriages and other ceremonies to suit their incomes, have raised the age of marriage, have checked indiscriminate and foolish giving to beggars, and have effected many other reforms. The reduction of ostentatious expenditure enables them to keep out of debt. The raising of the age of marriage reduces the birth-rate and ensures that the population of the village will not go on growing till it is impossible for the land to provide a living for all. The refusal to give charity to able-bodied impostors allows resources to be conserved for a truer liberality. The members of such Better Living Societies also learn to keep their houses and the surroundings of their houses free from dirt and ugliness, to give their children a real education in the home as well as at school, and to rely on their own exertions and respect themselves.

The Wizard

By THE REV. F. H. ALDHOUSE, M. A.

(I) THE GOING FORTH

I had picked up the book called " *Cantus Stellarum* " (Song of the Stars) on a Dublin hand cart. It was bound in faded velvet and had been clasped with silver—which was gone long since. The ugly little hunch-back who owned the cart said " Its ould and in some foreign language. Ye can have it for three bob." But as I moved away in pretended disgust, he called after me. " Two bob to ye ," and the book was mine. It was stamped " F. R. C." and there was no publisher's name. I wondered. Could it be a Rosicrucian publication ?

I decided to show it to the " Wizard ". He lived in a thatched cottage which was furnished with Adam furniture and was lighted with a brass candelabrum of Caroline times. Who he was no one knew. He was called Mr. " Grey," but that was because he always dressed in hat hue. He was said to have the knowledge which opened the gates to the Hidden Land.

I had tried to talk to him about that, but he only smiled and was silent. When he held the volume in his hands I saw he was filled with avid desire to possess it, his hands shook, his eyes gleamed.

" I would give you £10 for this," he said, " if you care to sell. A good profit on 2s. don't you think."

I resolved to put it to the test.

" Mr. Grey," I said " I believe you would pay much more than that for this old book. It is not however for sale, but I know you could let me walk on Mispec Moor. Do that, and the book is yours."

He did not hesitate a moment. " I will," he said. " Come here at 9 o'clock tonight, that is moonrise."

I was there and he led me into an empty room which I never knew was in the cottage. There was a circle marked in three different colours of chalk on the floor. There was a small mahogany table—the only article of furniture. On it stood a pewter plate holding a honey-comb, a beautifully wrought silver cup filled with wine so fragrant that its perfume was noticeable. Also there was a censer from which incense fumed in swirls of smoke and a priest's oilstock. The Wizard was dressed in a long white robe, with a jewelled ornament hanging from a silver chain about his neck. He asked me to enter the circle, and pouring some of the oil on to a linen cloth, he touched my

eyes, nostrils, lips and forehead and above my heart. This is what he said—

" If you would pass beyond the mist, into the living World of light
Your senses must be helped to wist the things beyond your mortal sight.
" I touch your eyes that they may see the hidden World of Mystery.
" I touch your nostrils, you must be aware
"Of difference between the foul and fair.
"I touch your forehead, that your thoughts may be
"In tune with these your eyes shall shortly see.
"And lastly I have touched your beating heart
"That all save purity from it depart."

After the unction he swung the censer about me so that I was surrounded by its intoxicating sweet breath. Then the Magus handed me the pewter dish saying—

"Take of this honey-comb and eat
And learn from it, the Magic Life is sweet."

I obeyed and received the challice drinking from it as he chanted—

"The wine makes glad
the heart that's sad.
The Druid vine that bore the grape
has power to grant to you escape.
Freedom from the flesh's power
Liberty from earth—an hour.
Drink, rejoicing there shall be
from earth's shadows liberty."

As he finished I saw the walls of the room become grey mist which drifted away, the voice of the Magus faded into the sighing of the wind. The candles were stars above my head. I was on Mispec Moor and I must go forth to Caer Orm.

(II) UNFINISHED QUEST

The world of men lay behind me, a grey-yellow smear of fog through which a livid light glimmered at times and then died out again. Infinite, as the sea about a ship becalmed in mid ocean, Mispec Moor stretched out on every side. Toward the extreme West the twin hills called the Paps of Maam, received the setting sun between their green breasts. Beyond lay Antan, the City of Twilight, where dwell gods who reign no more, but my own destination was Caer Orm where the Druid stones rise grey and mystic.

The white road stretched out, the moon pale before me as I walked slowly lost in thought. In Mispec time or distance are not things absolute, but depend on the mood of oneself. I was half over

my journey when I met *Him*. I had desired with all my heart to meet with the Other but a pale horse slowed down to keep pace with mine and a knight dressed in black armour, plumed and bearing an escutcheon of a vulture, his rider, spoke to me. Deep bass, his compelling voice, sonorous and kingly.

"Greeting, reverend father," the Knight said. "Your prayer to see the Merciful has been heard by Me, and I am glad that you have now that satisfaction."

"Sir," I answered and my voice quivered and my limbs trembled. "I meant Angus the Ever Young, His servant, when I prayed."

The Knight burst into peals of bleak laughter.

"You are rather conventional, a little imperceptive and not a very deep thinker, I fear, father," the Knight mocked and as I looked, rooted to the ground in terror, he lifted his visor. His face was like that of an unpitying Buddha—if you can imagine that. Calm, cold, stern, thin of lip, black of brow, livid, and for the first time I noticed the royal crown about his helmet, a rainbow of many wonderful gems in a golden circle. On it was inscribed in front in rubies, bright as burning flames—"I am Death, God of Gods, the One Reality."

"Yes, father," Balor Beman said "I am Peace, the true never failing friend. Are your pains never so fierce? I end them. Are the years wearying? I dissolve them. Are your sins black as Hell? I give you absolution and remission of them all. I make all memories fade into dreamless sleep. Reverend father, I am the merciful. When man is at his extremity, and all the gods forsake him, then come I gliding on quiet feet. I deliver him from the greatest of evils, the fever called life. My gifts are silence and dreamless sleep." But he laughed a deep scornful laugh as he said this.

"Sir," I faltered, "I have heard there is light beyond your darkness, and life beyond your death."

"A lie," Balor answered "the babble of the unbalanced."

His face seemed to me to grow until it dominated the very heavens. The awful ruined face of a Buddha who knew no pity but had solved all the mysteries.

"Come," the deep, sonorous and commanding voice cried, "Adore Me and renounce the phantom you call God."

I resisted in every fibre of my being that all but almighty Will, and looked about me with a last despairing glance. Then I saw the Boy running to my rescue. So small he seemed, so helpless before Him who but an instant before dominated the world, yet in that moment the Knight was but a mounted Knight, crowned no doubt, but of mortal proportions. I noted he ground his teeth in chill fury.

"Hey!" he grinned, "where did you spring from? Dear Playboy? Always a Marplot! How dare you interfere between myself and this reverend priest, just when I was completing his education too. Two is company, three is an intrusion. So get you gone to Dersam--or Antan would suit you best, it is the home of divine duds! Get going!"

The boy faced the warrior. "I am here because that priest called me. Twice, once when he came to Mispen Moor and once when you tried to whelm his will in yours and failed. You the merciful? Destroyer who creates nothing, terror that makes all conscious life for ever tremble. Robber who steals the beauty I make. Leave my votary and go to the Never-Never-Land of cold and darkness. A day will come when Lu Lavada ('Lug Lamfada'—'Far-reaching Light, God Almighty) will bear with you no more and you, the shadow of a shade, shall fade into Antan, the City of flitting shadows.'

"If a sermon was necessary, beyond doubt our mutual friend the Clergyman is ready and eager to oblige," Balor sneered, "but to hear a brat like you preaching is intolerable. Go, get out!"

The Knight levelled his spear at the boy and sticking his spurs into his horse, he charged and I thought was about to impale Angus, but with a marvellous nimbleness Angus Oge sprang aside, the spear plunging deep into the earth. Full tilt as he had charged, Balor was unhorsed. He rose and Angus and Balor clasped in each others arms appeared to melt into a cloud of mingled light and shadow.

"See," a voice spoke to me. "A Smear, Darkness and light in a swirl. That is life."

I went back wearily into the dirty mist of the human world. I had not reached Caer Orm, of the Druid stones, but had I not met the Merciful face to face?

(III) THE QUEST COMPLETED

I had at last reached Caer Orm, the Druid stones engraved with Ogam writing and decked with metal work towered above me grey and most venerable. As I stood between them I suddenly felt a small warm hand within my hand. The Sylam Ethlinn had joined me as she had promised. Knowing her great power and her position between the gods and the fairies, I was surprised to see her as a most beautiful child with rosy cheeks, braided chestnut hair with two locks hanging on each side down to her waist and large, grey eyes full of innocence and shining with lambent fire.

"To grow old in Eternity is to grow young," she said smiling, answering my unasked question.

Holding my hand we glided on, our feet not touching the ground. We passed the City of Wizards and Sorcerers 'Turoine' on our left.

"Pleasant enough people if you know them, but you do not," the Sylan said. On between the Paps of Maam we went; then Antan with its innumerable temples was before us. Space and time are but relative things on Mispec Moor. My eager desire to enter that town of the gods, made us enter in a few moments, the distance passing away before our flying feet.

We approached a mighty temple. A god of iron, filled with fire and with a burning fiery furnace between his knees, bellowed to us, for he had a bull's head with three eyes of flame.

"Bow down, bow down to Molock, the Mighty Monarch. O, priest, bring me victims, young succulent children, place them in my burning hands that they may fall into the furnace and pass through the fire to Molock."

"Sir," I said, "I am not your priest, I came to find the Merciful. You are clearly not He."

The god continued to bellow, but I and the Sylan passed on.

"He is only iron filled with flame" the Sylan said and smiled.

A most majestic face stood near. A woman veiled and wonderful with a sistrum in her hand called to us "I am Isis, I am all that was, is and shall be, and no one has lifted my veil. Come and learn of me, the secret I alone know, I am the mother of god."

I hesitated but the Sylan pulled my hand. "She is Nature," she said.

"Mother," I said, "I am your child. Pardon my passing on but I seek the Father and that you will approve," and I passed on with my guide.

I then came to a man close to a dagoba. So calm, so sweet, so noble was his bearing I could but salute him. "I am the master of the great Compassion" he said, "I teach the four noble truths, the eightfold path of righteousness, the cause and the cure of sorrow."

"He is Goutama Buddha who is above the gods," the Sylan said. "He is merciful but you seek the Merciful."

We came to a great Byzantine Temple and a gracious form came forth from it. "I am the White Christ of Russia" he said. The Czar is my vassal, I am the living Icon, the heavenly Czar. My servant and priest, in me behold your Master."

As I was about to fall on my knees the Sylan said "Look at his feet before you adore."

I did, and found them cloven.

"He is not the Merciful" the Sylan said. "The Russian Popes built him by their thoughts. He is the god of the wealthy and the masters."

We went from Temple to Temple. I saw ten false Christs, a manufactured Zoroaster, a fake Hindu and Babylonian god. There was a Jewish Temple, where a false Adonai demanded the blood of sheep and goats. And an Allah that was not the true One.

I said to the Sylan "I shall never find the Merciful, He is not here."

"How could He be?" she said, "These are dead gods, He lives."

"Where can I find Him?" I begged.

"You have come a great journey, you have seen every Temple in vain" she answered. "Look in your own heart."

I did, and there He was, and had been during all my search.

The Inner Gobi

The dry sea of the soul
The unventured way,
Drives chillness into the heart,
The bitter spray,
Of this dry sea,
Driving o'er desolate dunes,
Sees no change ever but the moon's.

Mongolia !
Before the emperors were,
This land lay as to-day
Unknown, untravelled o'er,
Unknown untravelled with its parching spray.
And through the interstices,
Of these dry sand-swept seas,
The winds rise wild with a drum-like roar.

No shadow of grass or tree,
On this dry sea,
Han hai !
The clanging gusts,
Shake sudden cymbals,
Immensity born from a voice of ghosts,
Mutters on every hand,
Interminable,
And no where aught in sight
To set us free,
Beneath the sword of such aridity.

Here rolls the name
Of one great Chinquiz Khan,
Sound of a drum,
Across the desolation,
Dense winds driven out and in,
Dense winds with demon din,
Call,
And the Blue Wolf calls
For the resurrection
Of some new Power,
Some other Chinquiz Khan
Rising above
With red Aldebaran.

And mighty spirits rule this distant land
In high command,
Over the Destinies,
Invisible cymbals silver music make,
Across invisible waters, and a snake
Image of fire and force,
Burns up above,
There where the constellations flash and move
About the Balance of Jade,
The powerful years,
Come back again,
And freed from human fears,
We turn once more with resolute will to face,
The mighty spirits of this inviolate place
Tall shapes of moving ether winged with fire,
Tinted with turquoise and the deepest sapphire.

Barnett D. Conlan.

Retribution

BY DR. RABINDRANATH TAGORE

(The following short story, published in the *Visw-Bharati Quarterly*, is a more or less literal translation in prose, by Kshitis Roy, of the original narrative poem, " Parishodh ", written by India's greatest poet, Rabindranath Tagore in September 1899. The poem has also been set to music by the author and was recently staged in Calcutta under the title of " Shyama ".

The theme of this story is taken from an old Buddhist legend of Nepal, where it is given as the reason why Buddha abandoned his faithful wife Yasodhara, who grieved for him during his long years away from home and kingdom. Buddha was Bajrasen in a former incarnation, and Yasodhara none other than Shyama, according to this ancient tale.)

"A theft in the King's Treasury! The thief or your head!" So ran the royal behest to the Captain of the guards. For fear of the royal threat guards scoured each street and searched every house for the thief.

Outside the city gate, in the crumbling ruins of a temple, they found Bajrasen, a Taxila merchant, who had come to Kashi (Benares) to sell horses, and robbed of all his belongings by highwaymen, was trudging back home with a heavy heart. Taken for the thief and bound in iron shackles, he was led to the prison by the Captain of the guards.

At that time Shyama, the beautiful courtesan, was sitting by a casement, amusing her idle hours with watching the passing scenes below. Suddenly she started and cried to her maids-in-waiting, "What a handsome man—a veritable rival of the king of gods! Alas! Why is he chained like a common criminal? Go, my friends, to the Captain and beg him, in my name, to honour this place with his captive." A call from Shyama, the beautiful, sent a thrill of joy through the voluptuous heart of the Captain and forthwith he hurried to Shyama's place with the captive behind him. Smiling, the Captain said, "Why this sudden favour to this humble admirer of yours? Allow me to hurry on the King's service." Suddenly raising his head, Bajrasen, his face flushed with indignant shame, asked, "What sport is this, fair maiden, adding insult to the injury of an innocent foreigner? What I led hither to be humiliated out of mere flippancy?"

"Alas!" replied Shyama, "No sport is this, strange wayfarer. On the contrary, so overwhelmed am I by your misfortune, that fain would I exchange these ornaments of mine for your chains. Your humiliation I feel as mine." So saying, she seemed to wash away the

stranger's shame with her flowing tears. Then turning to the Captain she pleaded, "Take my all and set free this innocent man wrongly accused." "So impossible a request," answered the Captain, "I dare not entertain, O beautiful one. The King is furious and some one's blood must appease his wrath." Shyama took the Captain's hands in her own and implored, "Allow the stranger two more nights at least."

"That shall be done," said the Captain, as he led his prisoner away.

On the second night the dungeon door was suddenly opened to let in a woman with a lighted torch in her hand. In a corner, heavily fettered, Bajrasen was awaiting in prayerful silence the fateful morn to dawn. At the woman's glance, the guard removed the chains from the prisoner's limbs and the amazed foreigner saw before him the fair face of Shyama, delicate and luminous as a full-blown lotus.

Profoundly moved, Bajrasen cried, "Who are you, who have come like the goddess of dawn with the morning star in her hand, to dispel the nightmare of this dungeon? You who are come like the breath of life to one dying, how am I to know you—the one merciful goddess in this cruel town?"

"I, merciful!" A bitter, hysteric laughter broke from her, filling the cell with awe. Laughing and sobbing, she cried, "Not one stone in the dungeon is harder than this heart of mine." So saying, she took hold of his hand and led him out of the prison walls.

The dawn was breaking over the forest-top in the east, beyond the banks of the river Varuna. A boat was moored, and leading him on board, Shyama whispered, "Come, stranger from foreign land, let us sail on the same current, recking no bar. Let me accept you as the lord of my life." The boat was set adrift. From either side of the river came joyous notes of warbling birds.

Clasping her face close to his breast, Bajrasen asked, "Tell me, what price did you pay to purchase my freedom? I want to hear it all, beloved, to know to what extent this miserable self is indebted to you." Nestling close Shyama murmured, "Let that alone now."

Backed by a lusty breeze, the boat sailed by swiftly on the hurrying current. Midday came. The village women had already gone back to their huts after their bath in drenched clothes, carrying holy water in brass pots. The market place was empty and silent, the pathways were deserted. Fastening the vessel to the worn-out steps under an ancient tree, the two made preparations for their bath and food. Above, the foliage was heavy with nests. The birds were without a twitter. The crickets lazily chirped away the long noonday.

A gust of warm wind, fragrant with the smell of ripe corn, fluttered away the veil from Shyama's face. Sudden passion inflamed Bajrasen's

being and in a choked voice he pured broken words into Shyama's ears. "You brought me freedom, only to make me a slave for ever. I owe you my life, and with my life shall I repay this debt,—only tell me how you procured my freedom." Replacing the veil, Shyama murmured, "Let that alone now."

Silently were the golden sails furled, and as the boat of light glided down to the haven below the western mount, the lovers' boat was wafted by the evening breeze to a wooded bank. The crescent moon was dying; a dim glow glimmered aslant upon the smooth surface of the water. The twilight shadows quivered with the song of the crickets, like the strings of a lyre.

Shyama put out the lamp and sat leaning on the shoulder of her companion, while the southern wind mingled with her breath Like a mysterious magic web, the scented mass of her black wavy hair covered his chest. Shyama whispered, "What I did for you, my love, was difficult indeed, but far more difficult is my avowing of it The few words I shall speak, forget them as soon as you have heard them. Uttiya, a mere youth pining in a hopeless love for me, took upon himself your punishment to oblige me. This, the worst crime of my life, I have committed for your sake, and let that be my glory, O you best of men."

. The dying moon had disappeared. The forest trees stood mute with the slumber of countless birds. Slowly the arm encircling Shyama's waist was withdrawn, and relentless separation yawned between the erst-while lovers.

Like a statue of stone Bajrasen sat motionless. Shyama threw herself at his feet and lay there like a creeper torn asunder. Darkness deepened over the inky surface of the river. Suddenly clasping Bajrasen's knee with all her strength, Shyama cried in hoarse, tearless sobs, "Forgive me, beloved. Let providence heap the cruelest retribution upon this cursed guilt of mine! But you must forgive what I did for you."

Shaking his feet free and gazing fixedly at Shyama, Bajrasen said "What need had you to save this life of mine? Forever is my breath polluted with the memory that it was purchased with your crime. Dishonourable woman, cursed be this life that is indebted to your shame."

So saying he broke away and disappeared into the darkness of the deep forest, startling at each step the bed of dry leaves. The heavy scent of foliage hung upon the motionless wind. In the encircling gloom the hordes of branches assumed grotesque and ghostly forms. The dense forest with its chain of creepers stretched its hands in a silent prohibition. The worn-out traveller sank on the ground wearily.

A spectral form stood by him like a shadow. Silently she had hung upon his footsteps through the long and arduous path in darkness,

her delicate feet covered with blood. Shaking his fist, Bajrasen roared in anger, "Will you not leave me alone?" Quick as lightning the woman clung to him, his body enveloped and flooded over, as with a torrent, by her embraces, her sweeping hair, her burning kisses and sighs, speechless with emotion she could only murmur, "Never will I leave you. For you I have sinned and from you must I receive my final retribution or recompense."

What blind intuition of an impending horror made the dumb trees in that starless gloom shiver in awe! A last mournful appeal before the woman's voice was smothered, and with a dull thud a form rolled over the ground.

As the first glimmer of dawn gilded the tridents on the temple top by the holy river, Bajrasen wended his way back from the forest. In glass-eyed madness he spent the livelong day wandering aimlessly on the lonely bank. The midday sun lashed him with its fiery thongs. Peasants returning home with their pitchers were touched by his desolate look and called to him in tender tones, "Who are you, O homeless one?" No response came from him. His throat was parched with thirst but he touched not a drop from the near-by river.

After the day was done, his body burning with fever, Bajrasen hurried towards the boat that lay moored where the lovers had left it, even as the moth hurries to the flame. His glance caught an anklet lying on the board. He hugged it to his breast, its jingles cutting into his heart like a hundred barbed arrows. On one side lay her blue dress thrown in a heap. He hid his face in its folds.

When the setting moon flickered through the branches of the seven-leaved tree, Bajrasen stretched forth both his arms towards the dark forest and called, "Come back to me, my beloved."

On the sandy bank appeared a shadowy form like a ghost among the ghostly trees. "Come back to me, beloved!" cried Bajrasen. "Here I am, my lord!" So saying Shyama flung herself at his feet. "Forgive me, for your pitying hands, alas, could not stifle my stubborn breath."

For an instant Bajrasen gazed at her face and made as if to gather up her prostrate form in his arms, but a shiver woke him from his trance and pushing her away he thundered, "Why did you come back?" He flung aside the anklet and kicked at the blue garment as if it were a heap of burning embers. He closed both his eyes and turning his face the other way cried, "Away, away! Leave me alone."

Shyama stood still for a while with bowed head, and then kneeling, bent her forehead in obeisance. Descending from the bank she slowly walked away into the darkness of the forest. Like an unearthly dream that disturbs one's repose for a while, she vanished into the blackness of the night.

Need for Protecting Museums from War

By T. V. SUBRAHMANYAM, B. A.

WAR is blind. Incalculable are the damages it does to human lives and human work. With the aid of scientific discoveries modern warfare continues to be all the more aggressive and destructive. High explosive and incendiary bombs are said to be thrown carelessly on every structure irrespective of its cost or utility. Edifices erected at high cost and with noble motives are either pounded to pieces or converted to ashes. Engineers and A. R. P. authorities are faced with the bifold problem of designing new air raid shelters and protecting the existing structures which are not anti-air-raid.

At a juncture like this when everybody is engaged heart and soul in saving his or her own life, it may appear improper at the outset to make an appeal that something should be done to protect the museum. If, as is considered by many, museums are only amusement houses to while away leisure hours, nothing immediate should be done in preserving them. But in reality they are not merely 'entertainment houses' but also 'enlightenment houses'. To raise the cultural level of the public, to kindle their latent potentialities for art and craft, to enable them to discover new things, to gain further control over the conditions in which we live and to secure further understanding about Nature and her laws—these are the functions of a museum. Charged with such noble missions, a museum, just like a University, is an asset of a nation and therefore all that is possible should be done in protecting it from the ravages of air raids and cannon balls.

The chief points that necessitate the preservation of museums are enumerated below :—

High Cost of Buildings. The very word museum has something arresting in it. As the main idea behind the museum is mass education and cultural uplift and as the beauty of the museum building makes an important part of its teaching, the founders of such institutions are generally very particular in the design and structure of these buildings. As a monument that contributes to the education and pleasure of the citizens, as a container of many costly and rare specimens, only strong buildings are erected for the purposes of a museum. Altogether museum buildings, as a rule, are of delicate architecture and of high cost. It will be something akin to suicide, if by our negligence, we allow such costly structures to be bombarded and destroyed.

Rare Collections and Biological Section. What constitutes the contents of a museum are the rare and valuable collections of many ancient and modern artists, scientists and other eminent scholars.

The whole Biological Section is the accumulated labour of numerous field and cabinet naturalists. Only when we realize the pains undertaken by the field naturalist in procuring the specimens, the brain energy spent by the systematists in naming them and the difficulties experienced by the Curators in perserving them from being deteriorated by insects, crumbs and dust—then only can we know of the true worth of these specimens. Nobody may suffer these collections to be wasted. They are not things which can be purchased from the bazar and easily replaced if once they are lost.

Archaeological and Ethnological Sections. These sections contain ancient relics and antiquities which are really the 'foot-prints' our forefathers have bequeathed for us. All our modern achievements in art and architecture are really based upon these ancient remains of art and craft. A close study of the Archaeological and Ethnological Sections will reveal many useful lessons: the rise and fall of various Empires; the men and manners of various countries and the history and progress made by humanity. It is therefore the duty not only of the votaries who revere antiquity but also of every citizen to protect these noble remnants of the past, not only for our own benefit but for the coming generations as well.

The Gem Rooms. The gem rooms are where the objects illustrating the more graceful side of ancient art are displayed such as gold ornaments, precious stones and other dainty articles of priceless worth. Their high price itself speaks of the necessity for their being carefully preserved.

Literary Section or the Library. Many museums have also a literary section where valuable volumes of ancient authors are preserved. The utilitarian aspects of a library are too well known to need any special mention here. Suffice it to say that it is a place where a reader finds "never-failing friends, with whom he can converse day by day".

Other Sections. The Other Sections of a museum are also established with a view to give to the ordinary citizen a knowledge of 'that which is', an understanding of the laws or rules in which we live, that possession which we called 'wisdom' in old age and is now called 'science'. In word every section of a museum teaches us 'that which is true' whereby we are enabled to do 'that which is right'.

Altogether a museum "touches all human interests, is concerned with the past, the present and the future, ranges through the whole history of letters, science, arts and profession and aspires to teach all

systematized knowledge". Such a noble institution, therefore, is expected to live for centuries and every nerve is to be strained to save it from the destructive action of war.

How to protect them. How to protect these institutions is the real problem. To construct new buildings in cement concrete under the A. R. P. design is easy to suggest but not immediately practicable due to various reasons. In the existing circumstances what can be done as an emergency measure is to adopt the "sand bags piling system" or the arrangement of hollow concrete blocks to protect the weaker sides of the buildings from splinters and direct hits of bombs. Small underground shelters can be erected in cement concrete in reasonably short time where the records and other costly portable specimens can be removed and temporarily locked up. The A. R. P. authorities will have other more useful and valuable suggestions to make which can be put into practice in consultation with them.

I cannot better conclude this paper but by quoting the wordings from page 1 of a Home Office (Air Raid Precaution Dept) Pamphlet on 'Shelters from Air Attack': "The standpoint is taken that advantage should be seized of every available means for improvisation and adaptation to secure protection and that nothing should be postponed which can be done now".

The Mysore Throne ;

A Tribute.

By S. V. RAMANUJAM

WITH the members of the royal family watching at his bedside, with the state officers watching and waiting for the news, with the whole Mysore State praying for his recovery, His Highness Sri Krishnaraja Wadiyar Bahadur passed away at Bangalore, on 3rd August 1940 and that too, at the height of regal fame and personal popularity. And when the news of his death was flashed upon the anxious State, it merely broke up in mourning groups. It was only in 1927 that the Silver Jubilee of the reign of His late Highness was celebrated with an enthusiasm unparalleled in the annals of the State. But to-day grief has swept over the whole country and there was a touch of universality in sympathy and sorrow on the occasion of his death. Messages of sympathy from all parts of the world poured in were of spontaneous and felial nature.

The 38 years of His Highness' reign was one of the memorable epochs in the annals of Mysore History. It was a period of intensive and startling progress and thus earned the name of a 'model state'. Mysore was the pioneer in constitutional developments and had political institutions so long ago as in 1881 when there was hardly any political institution in British India. The establishment of the University of Mysore (the first of its kind in any Indian State) the economic conference, the inauguration of the Iron and Steel Works and the construction of Krishnarajasagara Dam and Reservoir and the Irwin Canal, the Jog and Shimsa falls projects are few of the unstanding features of the reign of His late Highness. Among other industries may be mentioned the Cement Factory, Paper Mills, Sandal Oil Factory, Soap factory, a Weaving Factory, technical and industrial workshops, Porcelain and electrical factories. The development of roads, the restoration and maintenance of tanks, the construction of works of public utility, water supply and drainage schemes have been effected during this period. Medical relief and sanitation in urban and rural areas received special attention. Electricity catered the power to all industries in the State.

The cities of Bangalore and Mysore bear the work of his artistic genius. These speak for themselves, the goodness and wisdom of His Highness and the secret of his sway over the affections of his subjects. And for a true picture of His late Highness and a splendid panorama of the period during which he had been on the throne, we cannot do

better than turn to Rt. Hon'ble V. S. S. Sastri who said that "of all states in India, Mysore holds pride of place for assimilation to British standards in purity of services and attention to rural reconstruction as well as industrial advancement".

His late Highness was known for his industry, punctuality and conscientiousness. To be universally loved by the State as their accredited ruler is a singular triumph of his personal character. Such was his late Highness, his personality and his rule. Like Prometheus unbound, he ruled triumphantly unswerved.

The Mistress Asserts Herself

By S. A. VASUDEVAN, B. A. (Hons.)

"KANAKAM, Kanakam, don't you see you are spilling the sugar? I can't bear it! You're always spilling things and always breaking things. I can't bear it and I won't," cried Mrs. Meenakshi Rama Iyer.

Mrs. Rama Iyer seldom exhibited such outbursts of temper. Her husband was an acting Assistant Engineer now, and was expecting to be made a permanent one very soon. Ever since her husband told her, so long ago, of the possibility of his being made permanent, Meenakshi had been thinking of the changes in her person and home that must attend the rise. But she had grown tired of thinking now: the long expected rise was nearer now than ever, but this fact made little difference. For, as she said, until she knew that her husband had actually got the rise it would seem as distant as ever. There was nothing now to occupy her mind. She saw her cook emptying a packet of sugar into a jar and in so doing spilling some of the sugar. It was only in a mood of listlessness that Mrs. Rama Iyer jumped at the fault as something that might fitly engage her mind actively for some time.

"Yes, yes, Meenakshi," said Mrs. Kanakam, (who, by right of seniority in age, called her mistress by her name) "it's I am breaking things and spilling things always. Who broke the cup and saucer the other day? It was I, wasn't it? And who spilt a whole cup of coffee on your husband's new book, I should like to know?"

Mrs. Rama Iyer had not expected any sort of answer to her reproof; and when it came in the form of a retort, she was angered beyond measure. Kanakam had been Mr. Rama Iyer's cook for seven years before his marriage, and was his cook now for three years after it. When first Mrs. Meenakshi stepped into Mr. Rama Iyer's household as its mistress, Kanakam had been a good enough cook to deal with. Later, however, as Mrs. Rama Iyer found occasions too often to assert herself, Kanakam proved unmanageable. In her arguments with her mistress, she usually fell back on her previous experience (as Mr. Rama Iyer's cook) for support. "Meenakshi, I have been a cook here for close upon ten years and never till now......", she used to say. She supposed that because she had been in Mr. Rama Iyer's household so long before Meenakshi came into it, she had a greater right to dispose of things in the house than her mistress had. Meenakshi often tried to teach her who was mistress, but Kanakam remained unteachable.

This afternoon particularly, Kanakam was in a bad mood. In the morning the mistress had literally put her finger in Kanakam's pie and spoilt it. This by itself was bad enough. What was worse was that Mr. Rama Iyer had raised no objection, asked no question, and Kanakam had no opportunity to explain.

"My cook my mistress!" said Mrs. Rama Iyer in answer to the retort, "If you don't like your place here Kanakam, you are at liberty to leave it. I daresay I shall be able to get another cook." This put a stop to the conversation for the moment, and Meenakshi and Kanakam observed something like an armed truce.

Late in the evening Mr. Rama Iyer came home and told his wife that he was made permanent. He looked proud and happy when he delivered the news; and he expected his wife to be as happy as he was. Meenakshi was very glad certainly to hear of the rise; but she could have wished that it had not come to them just then. She had intended to tell her husband that evening of Kanakam's insubordination. It was clear now that this was not the time to tell him. Her husband was evidently very happy, and he expected her too to be happy. How could she tell him now of Kanakam? She knew that men do not like to be bothered wiih petty things, least of all do they like it when they have some good news to share with their wives. So Mrs. Rama Iyer said nothing about Kanakam. She looked as happy as she could; but all the time she was with her husband she was looking for an opportunity to break away from him. "The chaps in my Office will expect me to give them a grand garden party or some such thing. But what I want to do is to give a few choice friends of mine a dinner here at our house" said Mr. Rama Iyer in the course of his conversation. Mrs. Rama Iyer got the opportunity she was waiting for. "So I'll be getting things ready now then," she said. "How many are there, did you say?' "Why need you worry with the dinner? I'll tell Kanakam" replied Mr. Rama Iyer. Mrs. Rama Iyer could not very well explain her objections to his leaving things to Kanakam and she said nothing.

When later Mr. Rama Iyer told Kanakam of the "little dinner" Kanakam accepted his orders submissively enough: and then gave warning. Mr. Rama Iyer dismissed the warning as not seriously meant.

* * * * *

When the day of the dinner arrived, it found Mrs. R. busy in the kitchen. Mr. Rama Iyer never could know that it was she who was making all that clatter with dishes and cups. Meenakshi was going to make a grand dinner of it. Her husband had said that it was to be quite a little affair, but she would make it worthy of her and her husband. She wouldn't trust Kanakam with the dinner. Kanakam was in a bad mood now, and she wouldn't have it that a good dinner at her house should be spoilt by her cook's temper. Kanakam offered

to help, but Mrs. Rama Iyer rejected all her offers. When things were half read, Kanakam stepped up again : "Let me help you, Meenakshi". Meenakshi who had just then been thinking that she would die under the strain, roused herself up. "No need to trouble yourself at all, Kanakam" she said. "I have carried things half through alone, haven't I? I daresay I shall be able to carry them right through to the finish. I too can cook, I'll show you."

* * * * *

Dinner over, and his friends gone, Mr. Rama Iyer called his wife aside. "You call this a dinner! What a shame? What a disgrace is this to me? You may tell Kanakam to leave to-morrow, this instant if she will. And now I remember, she gave warning. She needn't remain here an instant ....."

"Please, please, don't......Let Kanakam remain".

"Not an instant more! Why should she? Do you know how ashamed I was of our dinner? A mere cook to insult me thus!"

"Please don't say any more. You couldn't be more ashamed of the dinner than I. And please let Kanakam remain. It was I who cooked the dinner."

Bharathi *

By S. KRISHNASWAMY.

BORN of our country and belonging to our people by race, Bharathi has been one of the most prominent figures in our public life. And today there is perhaps not another personality to whom the heart of the awakened Tamil goes with greater reverence and deeper affection than to this strange man. A magnetic figure, a finished writer and speaker, a capable organizer, endowed with large powers of imagination and sympathy and with a very rare combination of the subtle wisdom of the diplomat with the fervour of the prophet, Bharathi's influence on the minds of men has far exceeded that of other South Indian writers of recent times.

Subtle, shrewd, alert, independent, with courage of conviction, Bharathi was untouched by that higher education in life of which we all boast so much today. Nevertheless he grew up in a cultured atmosphere. Early in life he imbibed a profound taste for the master-pieces of Tamil Literature from his father. Kambar, Thiruvalluvar and Thayumanavar were introduced to him at an impressionable period When he was barely thirteen, he revealed his aptitude for literary work in songs whose appeal is univeral.

At the age of nineteen, Bharathi was left to fend for himself. He, whose days had been spent in the company of books and friends, was now virtually thrown on his own resources to go through life's common way as best he could. From now on, he was practically a rolling stone, He was for sometime the Tamil Pandit in the Sethupathi High School, Madura. For some time, he was the Sub-Editor of "The Swadesamitran". which owes its existence to Sjt. G. Subramania Iyer of blessed memory. But Bharathi did not remain there long. Destiny had marked him out for a higher vocation in life; he was called upon to edit "India", a Tamil Weekly. The paper was full of humour, satire and sarcasm and to this Bharathi contributed some of his best articles, pregnant with meaning and coated with humour.

Bharathi was a born fighter, an iconoclast. He hurled himself against the shams of his age and pilloried ante-deluvian concepts He lived in an age of great political upheaval, awakening, agitation and stir. He was the moving spirit, the very soul, of that great political movement of his time; he gave an impetus and vigour to it. He awakened mass enthusiasm and mass action. His personality was revealed to the public in all its aspects and he rose in their estimation. I am sure that the name of Bharathi will go down deep as one of those

* Commemoration Address delivered at The Students' Union, Mylapore on Bharathi Day.

persons who had contributed much to the growth and development of the political thought and culture of Tamil Nad.

Bharathi does not belong to one age or one clime; he belongs to all ages and all climes.

Bharathi's life is an open book to us; suffering and sacrifice were his badges in life. He had asked little of life and to him life had given little How sad it is to hear that this great poet was born in this holy land of ours only to suffer and toil so that he might keep the wolf away from the door. We have always stoned our prophets and starved our saints. The people of Tamil Nad recognised Bharathi's genius; they read, admired and appreciated his works but they denied him the bread that he badly needed. Like Goldsmith, Bharathi was destined to suffer in this land of plenty—Bharathavarsha; like Goldsmith, Bharathi could not laugh his way through life; like Goldsmith, Bharathi had no sufficient encouragement from the reading public; but nevertheless, like Goldsmith, Bharathi was a great writer.

Bharathi was a great singer; he is the author of many songs which have kindled the heart of every South Indian and have given him new life and new hope. His national songs dance on the lips of every South Indian at the present day.

Bharathi was also a prose writer. Like the Saviasachin he used his pen both in prose and in verse but his verses read better than his prose works.

Bharathi is indisputably the greatest mastermind in Tamil Poetry. He has been and will ever be enshrined in the hearts of the South Indian public as the Prince among Indian Poets. It was he who made Tamil bristle with new life, new hope and new vigour. It was again he who revived the old forgotten Tamil Literature by making it more appealing and less difficult to enjoy. But the greatest contribution of Bharathi to Tamil is the love and abiding interest that he created in the minds of his countrymen for Tamil literature by writing works, simple and forceful in style, works which represent the spirit of old India poured into modern moulds so as to appeal to "the widest commonality".

Bharathi's works are a landmark in the history of South Indian Literature. His works present the most interesting reading; people go in for his works as they go in for their daily bread; they need them so badly. "The Vow of Panchali" is indeed the master-piece of Bharathi. It has given him a name and a fame. It is a class by itself. All other works of Bharathi might be forgotten but this one classical piece of Tamil Literature will remain to posterity.

Why do we admire Bharathi? Is his style really of a high order? His poetic genius has brought Tamil Poetry to a high degree of

elegance and refinement; his style is pure and chaste. He excels other poets in his descriptions of the sublime and the beautiful.

Bharathi was one of the severest writers of India. His words are the most like things, his style is the most strictly suited to the subject. He excels in the dispaly of power, in showing the extent, the force and intensity of his ideas. He most frequently produced an effect by the remoteness and novelty of his combinations, by the force of contrast, by the striking manner in which the most opposite and unpromising materials were harmoniously blended together, not by laying his hands on all the fine things he could think of but by bringing together those things which he knew would blaze out into glorious light by their collision. Bharathi was a union of untameable vigour and originality.

Bharathi was not a verbose writer. If he, sometimes, multiplies words, it is not for want of ideas, but because there is no single word that fully expresses what he is trying to bring home to us.

Bharathi has been compared to Shakespeare and Kalidasa—I do not know for what reason. Their excellences are as different and indeed as opposite as they can well be.

"Those whom God love die young" and Bharathi was no exception to it. He died comparatively young. The cruel hand of Death snatched him away at a time when his countrymen needed him most. This generally happens in the case of great heroes of the various countries of the world. It may be truly affirmed of Bharathi that he was one of the brightest stars in the firmament of Indian Poetry. He is gone, but his spirit still lives in Tamil Literature. His place will be hard to fill. He had not lived his life in vain.

Whatever, the judgment of History may be on particular departments of Bharathi's activities, or on particular opinions and ideals he might have held, from time to time, there is one thing on which the verdict of friends and foes alike must be unanimous, namely, that with all his limitations, Bharathi had been the bravest and purest worker for the public good in his generation, the greatest thinker, writer and singer of South India.

I would make an appeal to the Government of my province to make the study of Bharathi's works compulsory in all Schools and Colleges; to the Tamil lovers of this country to encourage Bharathi's works by all possible means and to the women of Tamil Nad, in particular, to create in their children a love for Bharathi's works. A Central Organization for the encouragement of Tamil Literature is the crying need of the hour and I am sure that once it is established, the future of Tamil Literature will be safe in this country.

The Uralis of Periyar

By K. P. PADMANABHAN TAMPY, B. A.

126074

The Home of the Uralis. No person who is a lover of the mountains can afford to miss the delightful trip to the High Ranges which constitute an extraordinary mountain range resplendent with the colour and charm. For a traveller whose heart is after new experiences amid the grandeur of scenery acknowledged to be without peer, the High Ranges the region of sunny plains, glistening mountains, vast tea and rubber estates, singing woods, roaring torrents, full-blood aboriginees, unique fauna and gigantic hydro-electric undertakings—offer a diversity of attractions.

The Periyar lake in the heart of the High Ranges is a magnificent stretch of water which fills a series of valleys to a length of eight miles. The terraced hills rise in delicate curves from the shores of the lake covered with virgin forest. The Royal Game Sanctuary at Edapalayam on the Periyar Lake forms the natural habitat of a wonderful variety of wild game. The Periyar Region is a beauty spot, a happy hunting ground alike for big game and the aboriginal tribes who share the forests with wild beasts.

Human life in the Periyar Forests is most primitive. This region affords ample scope for research to the enterprising anthropologist and ethnographist. The hill folk who inhabit this area are a set of interesting people, simple in manners and habits, primitive in dress, shy by nature, and contented. They are known as *Mala Uralis.* The Urali population is somewhere about a thousand. Legend and tradition aver that the Uralis are the descendents of the umbrella carriers of the Madura Kings of old, and that they were ordered by them to rule over the Hills. The word "*Uralis*" connotes rulers of the country. They are divided into eight exogamous clans. Colourful stories describe the origin of these clans. The offsprings belong to the clan of the mother. There is a scarcity of women among the Uralis. According to their marriage custom a man who has no sister is not entitled to a wife, for marriage usually takes place by the exchange of sisters. Cross-cousin marriages are, however, not rare. Polyandry is rare. Marriages take place both before and after the attainment of puberty. On the day of the marriage, the bridegroom accompanied by his father pays a ceremonial visit to the bride's hut. After a sumptuous feast, they return with the bride to their home. The dowry comprises of weapons, implements, clothes and utensils. Remarriages are not uncommon among the Uralis. Marumakkathayam is the form of inheritance prevalent among them. The sons are also given a share of the earnings. The Uralis treat their womenfolk with great respect and deep affection.

Customs and Manners. The Uralis are comparatively more civilised than their brethren in other hills, due to contact with the Planters. The Uralis in the High Ranges take delight in wearing shirts, coats and turbans. The men wear a loin cloth four cubits long and two cubits wide. They purchase second-hand clothes and use them until they become tattered. They do not bother about their attire. They wear the same dress during the summer and winter. When out hunting or travelling they invariably carry a blanket which serves as a hold-all to accommodate their necessaries of life. They frequent the hill markets and now and then descend to the low country for purchasing tobacco, salt etc, which they regard as precious delicacies. The Urali is distinguished by his long head, flat nose, thick lips, broad forehead, black curly hair, massive chest, large torsos and somewhat fair complexion. They wear thick tufts on the back of their heads. The Travancore Census Report says that the " Urali is the most dolichocephalic of the hill tribes with a cephalic index of 70·6 ", and that " the average nasal index of the Urali is 84·6". They are still in the lowest rung of the ladder of civilisation and are quite contented to be so. Extraordinarily strong, sturdy, and well-built the Uralis are eminently fitted by birth and breeding, to live in their wild surroundings. Of extremely active habits and ever alert, they have developed a keen sense of smell and with amazing ease they scent out wild animals. The forest tribes who live in the inaccessible wilds, are attached to the Forest Department and they collect and supply some of the forest produce such as honey, cardamom, wax, dummer. Their primary occupation is nomadic agriculture. They subsist on roots and herbs which form their staple food. They cultivate hill paddy on the slopes of the mountains. A part of the produce they take to the markets, and barter it for clothes, tobacco, salt and the like. The hill folk surpass civilised men in honesty, integrity, trustfulness, simplicity, modesty and hospitality.

Their customs and manners are interesting. Girls who have attained puberty observe pollution for seven days. During that period such a girl is accommodated in a tree-house exclusively reserved for the purpose. On the eighth day she takes a bath, proceeds to another tree house and lives there for a couple of days. Women during the period of menstruation have to confine themselves to distant tree houses. Child-birth takes place inside a tree-hut and the consequent pollution lasts for 21 days. The husband has to sit at home and abstain from work till the 22nd day when his wife returns to the house with the child. The Urali women wear pretty little bandeaux in their hair in Greecian fashion. They adorn their bodies with beads and shells. They use bangles and bracelets, and ear and nose ornaments.

Rituals. The Uralis are highly and ridiculously superstitious. They offer homage to crests of hills which they believe are the

sanctuaries of the "Shining Ones". The hill folk believe that the forests are peopled with fairies, devils, dwarfs and all sorts of uncanny creatures. Their prayers are in the form of petitions and entreaties wishing immunity from disease and danger, the supply of sufficient food and for general happiness. To them the Sun is the creator and father of the universe and the moon the mother. They believe that the earth rests on the massive shoulders of two gigantic demi-gods by turn and that earthquakes occur when one *Bhima* hands over charge to another. To them, thunder, lightning and rain are the manifestations of duels between the *Bhimas* (demi-gods) in heaven and the rainbow is Sri Rama's Bow. Beliefs, traditions, customs – the legacy of centuries and the origin of which must be sought for in the twilight of dim and distant legends—are firmly rooted in the minds of the credulous hillmen who as a rule retreat at the advance of civilisation.

The Uralis bury their dead about a furlong from their hut. The principal mourner is the nephew. The grave is dug deep and billets of wood, and reed mats are thrown into it. The sides of the grave are also covered with reed mats. The corpse, bathed and covered with a new cloth, is then consigned to the pit and a new reed mat is placed over it. Each relative has to put one cloth in the grave. In the right arm pit of the corpse are deposited the bill hook and chewing materials used by the deceased. A quantity of boiled rice is also placed in the pit. The grave is then filled up with earth, a stone planted by its side and a shed is constructed over it. The mourners observe pollution for sixteen days.

The spirits of the departed ones are propitiated with elaborate ritual and overwhelming awe by the Uralis during the season of harvesting and on other festive occasions when pleasure and excitement, expressed in song and dance are at their highest pitch. During these special gala days the tribe works itself up to a hysterical pitch of excitement and enthusiasm often times stimulated by intoxicating beverages. Their folk-songs indicate their nearness to earth, their simplicity and their hoary belief in the numerous deities. The colour, fire and sparkle of the songs and the poetry of their smilies and tears provide an interesting study. Their songs are mostly prayers and are sung by their priests who are held in absolute fear and veneration by the simple and credulous Uralis. Some of the priests also assume the role of Medicine Men. Their Medicine Men are, in their own language, known as *Plathis* and are credited with the power of curing diseases and other human ailments by invoking the aid of the Gods and Spirits. The Plathis or Witch Doctors endeavour to cure diseases by songs and gruesome contortionist dances accompanied by prayers, incantations and wild and intoxicated chorus. They let loose a full blast of incantatory gibberish spiced with obscenities. The Uralis

have implicit faith in sorcery and black magic and in the prowess of their Witch Doctors. These medicine men who are adepts in weird sorcery carry on a lucrative trade.

Their Habitation. The Uuralis dwell together in clans and each settlement consists of a large number of small huts, some on raised ground and some perched on the top of trees. The huts are made of reeds, bamboos and leaves of the elephant reed, all got in plenty from the forests. The floor of the hut is on a level with the ground. The safety huts on the tree tops serve as a protection against wild elephants that room in the forests in large herds causing considerable havoc to human life and crops. The Tree-houses are called *Anamadams* (elephant huts). The rectangular type of huts is most popular with the forest folk who inhabit the Periyar Region. The tree houses are built thirty to forty feet above the ground. A thick, strong bamboo the side shoots of which have been carefully chopped off serves as the ladder which establishes communication with the ground. The roof of the huts is thatched with reeds and leaves and bamboo thatties from the walls. The huts are huddled together and are rather smart in appearance. The dwellings are, however, ill-ventilated and untidy and the sanitation is too poor. The Uralis are experts in rattan and reed-wicker work and basket making.

The *Kanikkaran*, as he is called, is the patriarchal chieftain for a group of Urali hamlets. He is the uncrowned monarch and the supreme director and dictator of the social, religious and agricultural affairs of his tribe. Each village has a *Plathi* or medicine man who is responsible for the good conduct of the inhabitants of the hamlet. The *Plathi* reports to the *Kanikkaran* about disputes in the village. The *Kanikkaran* forthwith proceeds to the hamlet, summons the *Panchayat* (Village Council of Elders) presides over the meeting and settles the dispute peacefully. The *Panchayat* is the final court of appeal. The delinquents are not as a rule visited with fines.

The Uralis inhabiting the inaccessible wilds prefer the aboriginal method of producing fire by rubbing two pieces of wood. The wood used is *Isora Cori Folia*. Their cooking is simple, for they have only very few dishes. For the most part they bake roots and fruits by thrusting them into the glowing fire. Their most delicious dishes are bamboo plantains, bamboo joints holding honey, fruits, roots, beasts, birds and fish. Some of them use milk but the majority hate it. Tea has become an indispensable drink with most of the Uralis. They use copper and brass vessels. Their chief weapons are chopping knives, pellet-bows and muzzle-loading guns. The pellet-bow which flings with tremendous force sharp stones has a range of 100 yards. It is of great use to the hill folk in killing small game and driving away monkeys. The Uralis use sickles and spades.

The Uralis are a good natured, freedom-loving, pagan people, sun-bronzed, and handsome in a wild sort of way. They live in close association with Nature and the simplicity of their souls is really enviable. They are extremely orthodox and do not intermarry among or interdine with the other forest folk. The hill men are supposed to be the original inhabitants of the country. These aboriginal tribes speak a corrupt form of Tamil and Malayalam. They are very hospitable and their concern for and goodwill towards those people who go into the forests are proverbial. They provide their visitors with rich and ample food and are ever alive to their needs. The Uralis may be rude in talk but they are kind and extremely hospitable.

The Uralis are experts in wood craft and their services are indispensable to big game hunters. They willingly help the Shikkaris and cheerfully guide them through the dense jungle and initiate them into the mysteries of hunting wild game. These Uralis keep hunting dogs and are fond of these animals. With marvellous precision the Uralis spot out and explain the marks left by the wild animals and lead the sportsman on. They would take up precarious positions over jetting rocks and crags and with nothing except wide space in front of them, search the surrounding country with their naked eyes and point out to green patches on the hilly slopes and assure you that a herd of Sambhur stags is peacefully grazing there.

The hamlets of the Uralis are generally situated on beautiful sites and in superb natural surroundings. This is due to their overwhelming reverence for the hills and rivers, which they believe to be the sanctuaries of the " Shining Ones ". The forest folk are superstitious and their acts of adoration are characterised by a Spartan simplicity. Seeing the hill folk at prayer any student of English literature will be forced to recall the beautiful lines of Wordsworth, the high-priest of Nature.

> " Great God, I'd rather be
> A Pagan suckled in a creed outworth—
> So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
> Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn,
> Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;
> Or hear Old Triton blow his wreathed horn ."

Druid Song.

Across the fields the sunbeams fly
    Inamoured shadows follow fast
Sunlight as white clouds float on high
    In their pursuit speed ever past.

And that is life : its joy and woe
    Is but a shadow and a light
For in a double-jig they go
    Night partners day, and day the night.

Know that O heart and join the twain
    Rejoice, the *Pas-de-trois* is gay
For not an hour is past in vain
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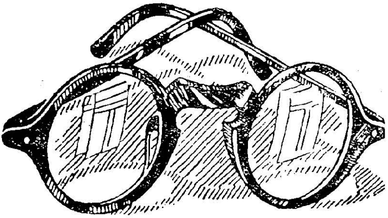

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THE SCHOLAR ANNUAL, 1940

PUBLICATION IN OCTOBER

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It will contain a larger number of features than usual, and numerous pictures, views, stories, poems and contributions in lighter vein.

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